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By *ADAM FITZ-ADAM.*

To be continued every THURSDAY.

THURSDAY, *March* the 7th, 1754.

To Mr. FITZ-ADAM.

SIR,

I HAVE ſomewhere read of the ſaying of a philoſopher, I believe it was in the Spectator, " That every one ought " to do ſomething in the world to " ſhew that he has been in it." I am therefore, though a woman, deſirous of leaving behind me the following teſtimony of my exiſtence, and of convincing poſterity that in point of birth I have had the ſtart of them.

IT is of late grown into a faſhion among the men to treat the buſineſs of VISITING with great diſreſpect: they look upon it as a mere female recreation, and beneath

neath the dignity of their ſuperior natures. Yet notwithſtanding their contempt of it, and the odious name of GADDING which they have given it, I do not find that they fail in their appearance at any of our aſſemblies, or that they are better able than us women to ſhut themſelves up in their own houſes, when there is any thing to be done or ſeen abroad. If they would content themſelves with finding fault with the Name and not the Thing, I ſhould have no quarrel with them; the word VISIT being of ſo various and uncertain a ſignification, that I am always at a loſs in what ſenſe to underſtand it.

A SISTER in law of mine, who lives about ten miles from town, ſent me ſome time ago a very preſſing letter, deſiring my aſſiſtance, and that of my cook maid, for a few days; her houſe, as ſhe ſaid, being likely to be put into great hurry and confuſion from the preparations they were making for the reception of my lord Whimſey, who had ſent my brother a card that he intended him a VISIT the week following. I ſet out accordingly with my cook; and when every thing was got ready in the beſt and genteeleſt manner that my brother's fortune would afford for the entertainment of ſo noble a gueſt, down comes my lord as expected; who upon alighting from his chariot, gave orders to his coachman to keep the horſes in motion, for that his ſtay ſhould not exceed fifteen minutes. His lordſhip took a walk through the garden; ſeemed greatly pleaſed with it's ſituation and deſign; very politely excuſed himſelf from making a longer ſtay, and took his leave with ſaying that he hoped ſoon to do himſelf the pleaſure of making him a ſecond VISIT.

IT would be taking up too much of your time to enter minutely into the family diſtreſs upon ſo vexing a diſappointment: let it ſuffice to tell you that it was near

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a fortnight before my poor ſiſter perfectly recovered it, or before ſhe left off her hourly-repeated queſtion of, "What ſhall we do with all this load of victuals?" My lord next day at WHITE's was giving high encomiums on my brother's ſeat and the goodneſs of the air in that part of Surrey, and was pleaſed to ſay that he thought it the compleateſt thing of it's ſize within twenty miles of London. Upon which Sir Humphry Hobling, a diſtant relation of ours, propoſed being of my lord's party at his next VISIT. Accordingly in about three weeks a ſecond card informs my brother of a ſecond VISIT.

BY this time I and my maid, together with two or three ſupernumerary aſſiſtants and female humble couſins, were diſmiſſed, after having ſtaid a fortnight, by particular deſire, to help eat up the paſties, pyes, tarts, jellies, ſillabubs &c. which had been provided for my lord, and were now looked upon as mere drugs in a family which uſually contented itſelf with two ſubſtantial diſhes, or one and a pudding.

IT was not in the leaſt doubted that my lord's ſecond VISIT would be of the ſame nature with the firſt; his lordſhip's card being conceived exactly in the ſame words: there was therefore no need of fuſs or preparation; my ſiſter too had pretty well worn off the dread of making her appearance before ſo great a man. According to his appointment my lord arrived, and with him Sir Humphry, and colonel Shuffle, a great favourite of my lord's, and a number of ſervants with portmanteaus, guns, pointers, ſetters, ſpaniels, &c.——My poor dear ſiſter!——I wiſh you were a woman, Mr. Fitz-Adam, and had kept houſe in the country, that you might know how to pity her. The rumour of my lord's arrival having ſoon ſpread

itſelf,

itſelf, ſeveral of the neighbouring gentlemen came the next day to dine with my brother, and to pay their compliments to his lordſhip; the greater part of whom, by Sir Humphry's inceſſantly puſhing about the claret, were rendered utterly incapable of returning to their homes that night. To ſhorten my ſtory, my lord and the colonel, finding the air to agree with them every day better than the other, continued there a fortnight; and Sir Humphry, having drank himſelf into a fit of the gout, is, with his lady and family (whom he ſent for to attend him) at this day upon his VISIT.

I HAVE heard much of the copiouſneſs of the Engliſh language, and would fain know why it is that people can find no term to expreſs their deſign of ſtaying fifteen days at your houſe, different from that which ſignifies fifteen minutes? Have they no way of expreſſing the time of their continuance but by the one word VISIT? Surely, Mr. Fitz-Adam, a more correct and intelligible method of conveying upon cards or otherwiſe the VISITOR'S deſign upon the VISITED might be found out; giving him to underſtand at ſight what he is to do towards a proper reception: whether it be to order a fire in the beſt parlour; to ſee if the death warrant for poultry, roaſting pigs, &c. be to be ſigned; if ſheets, beds and chambers are to be aired, or a month's proviſion to be laid in. All this, I conceive, may be eaſily effected by a method, which for the good of all maſters and miſtreſſes of families, I am now going to communicate.

WHEN a fine lady, having a new-faſhioned ſuit of clothes, or a new piece of ſcandal to circulate, finds it neceſſary to call upon forty or fifty of her acquaintance in one day; or when a fine gentleman chuſes to ſignify his intention of making a ſhort VISIT, like my lord Whimſey's

Whimſey's firſt; I am for an abridgment of the word, and only calling it a VIS. When a gentleman or lady intends taking a family dinner with a country friend, or a diſh of tea with a town one, I would have that called a VISIT. But when a perſon propoſes ſpending ſome days, weeks or months at a houſe, I would call that a VISITATION. So that for the future cards might very properly be written in the following form. "Lady "Changeherfriend's compliments to lady Fiddlefaddle, "and intends to VIS her ladyſhip this evening." Lord "Stiff's compliments to Sir Gregory Quibus at his "houſe at Hampſtead, and intends to VISIT him "the firſt fair day." "Captain Fearaball's compli- "ments to Ralph Hardhead Eſq; at his ſeat near Bur- "ford downs, and intends him a VISITATION the be- "gining of next month, to take a crack of hunting "with him." Thus, Mr. Fitz-Adam, will the terms of VISING, VISITING and VISITATIONING always carry an exact meaning with them, and be ſuch as the loweſt capacity cannot fail of underſtanding. I am, with great eſteem,

DEAR SIR,

Your conſtant reader and admirer

SUSANNA FRETTABIT.

P. S. IF this letter ſhould happen to pleaſe you, who are all the world to me, I may very ſhortly ſend you a few neceſſary remarks upon each of theſe three VISITMENTS; in which I may obſerve at large that the VIS ſeems to be chiefly confined within the bills of mortality, or to the inhabitants of large towns, and is applicable to the tranſacting of buſineſs in general. The VISIT is more particularly for ſtill life and ſet compliments. The VI-

SITATION